The Hidden Fence

By Mansoor Ali Shah
لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ

Baba: Mansoor, come sit with me. I want to tell you something very important today.

Mansoor: Yes, Baba! What is it?

Baba: Have you ever seen a fence around a garden?

Mansoor: Yes, Baba. It keeps animals and people from entering the garden.

Baba: That's right! Now, imagine a shepherd who takes his sheep near that fence. What do you think might happen?

Mansoor: Hmm… The sheep might accidentally step into the garden, Baba.

Baba: Exactly! This reminds me of a Hadith of our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He said that what is halal (allowed) and haram (forbidden) are clear, but between them are doubtful things that most people don't know about. Whoever avoids these doubtful things protects his religion and honor. But whoever indulges in them is like a shepherd who grazes his sheep near a private pasture—he may unknowingly step into it.

Mansoor: Oh! So, if we stay away from things that are doubtful, we will be safe?

Baba: Yes, my dear. That is why a wise person does not go near things that might be wrong. It's just like keeping a safe distance from a dangerous place.

Mansoor: But, Baba, how will I know what is doubtful?

Baba: Good question, my son. We must always learn and seek guidance from the Quran and Sunnah. If something feels unclear, we should ask someone knowledgeable, like an imam or a scholar. Most importantly, we must keep our hearts pure because our Prophet ﷺ also said, There is a piece of flesh in the body that, if it is good, the whole body becomes good, but if it is corrupt, the whole body becomes corrupt, and that is the heart.

Mansoor: Oh, Baba! So, if I keep my heart clean and stay away from doubtful things, I will always be safe, right?

Baba: Yes, my dear. A pure heart guides a person to make the right choices. Always remember that Allah loves those who are careful and conscious of Him.

Mansoor: Thank you, Baba! I will always try to keep my heart pure and stay away from doubtful things.

Baba: That's my boy! May Allah always keep you on the right path.